

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE NIACT IMMEDIATE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 177775

NESCO

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TAGS: AORG, OCON, XK, XL, XM

SUBJECT: UNESCO INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON
COMMUNICATION POLICIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN:
AMBASSADOR'S LUNCHEON WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL M'BOW
REFS: A) SAN JOSE 3436; B) PARIS 20635

1. FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS ARE SUGGESTED FOR AMBASSADOR
TODMAN DURING JULY 18 LUNCH WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL M'BOW:
A) USG FIRMLY FAVORS PROGRAMS AIMED AT ASSISTING THIRD-
WORLD COUNTRIES TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN COMMUNICATION
CAPABILITIES. AT 18TH GENERAL CONFERENCE (1974) U.S.
CALLED ATTENTION TO INADEQUATE FLOW OF INFORMATION FROM
DEVELOPING TO DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND CALLED FOR EXPANSION
AND MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES THROUGH
COOPERATIVE SHARING OF THE MOST ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AND
THROUGH TRAINING AND EXCHANGE OF PERSONNEL.

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B) DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CLEARLY BENEFIT FROM FLOW OF
INFORMATION, WHICH MAKE AVAILABLE ENTIRE RANGE OF KNOW-HOW
NECESSARY FOR DEVELOPMENT, AT A FRACTION OF THE COST THEY
WOULD INCUR WERE THEY TO PRODUCE IT THEMSELVES. TRANSFER

OF KNOWLEDGE IS NOT FUNDAMENTAL UNESCO TENET, IT IS ITS MAIN RAISON D'ETRE. ANY DIMINUTION OF FREEST POSSIBLE, MULTI-DIRECTIONAL FLOW OF INFORMATION IS NOT ONLY INCOMPATIBLE WITH UNESCO CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES, IT HOBBLER THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.

C) FREE FLOW IS ALSO A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF U.S. CONSTITUTION AND AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN THE AMERICAN WAY AND PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE. U.S. BELIEVES THAT A PEOPLE'S FREEDOM IS INSEPARABLE FROM A FREE PRESS. CONTROL OF THE MEDIA, EVEN FOR WHAT MAY BE RATIONALIZED AS A BENEFICIAL PURPOSE (E.G., IMPOSITION OF A CODE OF BEHAVIOR) IS DANGEROUS BECAUSE IT CAN EASILY LEAD TO TOTAL GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS AND THE OTHER INFORMATION MEDIA. THIS EXPLAINS THE CONCERN OF THE AMERICAN PRESS OVER THE SAN JOSE CONFERENCE -- A CONCERN SHARED BY THE MEDIA OF MANY OTHER COUNTRIES BOTH IN LATIN AMERICA AND ELSEWHERE. THE U.S. HAS HAD A FREE PRESS THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY, AND IT IS WELL AWARE OF THE DIFFICULTIES A FREE PRESS CAN POSE FOR GOVERNMENTS. A FREE PRESS CAN BE AWKWARD, ANNOYING, AND SOMETIMES IRRESPONSIBLE; YET, IN THE LONG RUN, IT IS ONE OF THE BEST GUARANTEES THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE WILL BE PROTECTED.

D) U.S. IS CONCERNED THAT THE SOVIET UNION AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ARE USING THE THIRD WORLD'S LEGITIMATE CONCERNS ABOUT THE QUANTITY AND DIRECTION OF THE FLOW OF INFORMATION, ESPECIALLY AS IT AFFECTS THEIR NATIONAL IDENTITY, TO BUILD AN INTERNATIONAL RECORD AGAINST FREE FLOW (IN OPPOSITION TO THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT) AND THEREBY PUT AN INTERNATIONAL STAMP OF APPROVAL ON THEIR OWN INTERNAL POLICIES OF STRICT GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL. THUS, AT THE DECEMBER 1975 UNESCO GOVERNMENTAL MEETING THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS ALLIES WERE ABLE, AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE U.S. AND OTHER WESTERN NATIONS, TO RAM THROUGH A SERIES OF AMENDMENTS WHOLLY INIMICAL TO THE CONCEPT OF THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND THE FREE FLOW OF NEWS AND IDEAS.
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2. WE HOPE AMBASSADOR TODMAN WILL TAKE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FELT WITHIN USG FOR LEADERSHIP M'BOW HAS GIVEN UNESCO AT PARTICULARLY TRYING PERIOD IN ITS HISTORY. USG IS VERY MUCH AWARE OF HIS CONTINUED, DETERMINED AND LARGELY EFFECTIVE EFFORTS TO SEEK RESOLUTION OF OR AVOID CONFRONTATION OVER VARIOUS POLITICAL ISSUES WHICH HOLD POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DAMAGE TO IMAGE AND SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF UNESCO. USG IS ALSO VERY MUCH AWARE OF DIFFICULTIES FACED BY M'BOW AS RESULT OUR INABILITY TO PAY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 1975 AND 1976. (FYI: US PAYMENT OF OUR ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNESCO FOR CY 1975 AND 1976, AS WELL AS PORTION OF CY 1974, HAVE BEEN WITHHELD AS RESULT OF LEGISLATION PASSED BY CONGRESS IN LATE 1974 IN REACTION

TO ANTI-ISRAEL RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT 18TH GC.) ONE

PREVENTED ISRAEL FROM BECOMING A MEMBER OF EUROPEAN REGIONAL GROUP, LEAVING IT ONLY COUNTRY NOT A MEMBER OF A GROUP. SECOND RESOLUTION CUT OFF UNESCO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL (\$24,000) UNTIL ISRAEL

TERMINATED ITS ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGS IN JERUSALEM WHICH ARABS ALLEGED WERE DESECRATING AND DESTROYING MOSLEM RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS. THE THIRD CALLED FOR UNESCO SUPERVISION OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN ISRAELI-OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES. THE CONGRESS HAS DIRECTED THAT NO FUNDS SHALL BE OBLIGATED OR EXPENDED ON BEHALF OF UNESCO UNTIL THESE RESOLUTIONS ARE RESCINDED. AT THE PRESENT TIME THERE SEEMS LITTLE MOVEMENT TO REVERSE THESE RESOLUTIONS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ADMISSION OF ISRAEL TO THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL GROUP. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, IN EFFECT, HAS RECOMMENDED THAT ISRAEL BE ADMITTED. THE 19TH GC WILL ACT ON THAT RECOMMENDATION IN NAIROBI. END FYI.)

3. AMBASSADOR TODMAN IS REQUESTED TO INFORM M'BOW THAT PRESIDENT HAS JUST SIGNED STATE'S FY 1977 APPROPRIATION BILL WHICH INCLUDES APPROXIMATELY \$3.5 MILLION FOR PAYMENT TO UNESCO. FYI: SUM REPRESENTS \$2.7 MILLION STILL OWED FOR CY 1974 AND 823,600 FOR CY 1975 ADVANCE TO WORKING CAPITAL FUND. PAYMENT OF THESE SUMS WILL PERMIT CONFIDENTIAL

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U. S. TO VOTE AT 19TH GENERAL CONFERENCE IN NAIROBI (OCTOBER 26 - NOVEMBER 30) EVEN THOUGH U. S. STILL OWES \$39.2 MILLION FOR CY 1975 AND 1976. END FYI. GIVEN THE LARGE ARREARAGE STILL REMAINING AND THE VERY SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES THIS HAS CREATED FOR M'BOW (E.G. HE HAS BEEN FORCED TO SEEK INTEREST-FREE LOANS FROM ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND TO MAKE DIFFICULT CHOICES RE PROGRAM/PERSONNEL FREEZES OR CUTS), M'BOW IS LIKELY TO BE SOMEWHAT AMBIVALENT ABOUT NEWS WE WILL DEFINITELY PAY \$3.5 MILLION. HOWEVER, AMBASSADOR SHOULD POINT OUT THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT STEP WHICH WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN 19TH GENERAL CONFERENCE, WITH STRONG DELEGATION.

4. FOLLOWING ARE BIODATA AND PERSONALITY TRAITS WHICH AMBASSADOR TODMAN MAY FIND HELPFUL IN HIS MEETING WITH THE DIRECTOR GENERAL:

A) BORN MARCH 20, 1921, DAKAR, SENEGAL. MOSLEM. TOUCOULEUR ETHNIC GROUP. MARRIED TO DAUGHTER OF HAITIAN DIPLOMAT (EDWARD SYLVAIN), SOME OF WHOSE RELATIONS LIVE IN JAMAICA, NY. AFTER WWII SERVICE IN FRENCH ARMY, HE WAS EDUCATED AT UNIVERSITY OF PARIS, FACULTY OF ARTS,

EARNING LICENCE ES LETTRES 1951. TAUGHT AT COLLEGE MODERNE, ROSSO, MAURITANIA, 1951-53. RETURNED TO SENEGAL IN 1953 TO ESTABLISH SENEGALESE BASIC EDUCATION SERVICE POLITICALLY ACTIVE, HE SERVED TWICE AS MINISTER OF EDUCATION (1957-58, IN TRANSITIONAL PRE-INDEPENDENCE GOVERNMENT, AND 1966-68), ONCE AS MINISTER OF CULTURE AND YOUTH (1968-70), AND AS MEMBER OF SENEGALESE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (1968-70). FROM 1970 TO 1974, M'BOW WAS UNESCO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND WAS ELECTED UNESCO DG IN NOVEMBER 1974 (WITH U.S. THE FIRST OF MAJOR DONORS TO BACK HIM). HIS LANGUAGE IS FRENCH; HE UNDERSTANDS ENGLISH BETTER THAN HE SPEAKS IT, AND HE HIMSELF PREFERS TO SPEAK FRENCH.

B) M'BOW HAS TRAVELED WIDELY IN AFRICA AND EUROPE. SINCE BECOMING DG HE HAS MADE OFFICIAL VISITS TO MOST OF MAJOR DONOR COUNTRIES, EXCEPT U.S. HE VISITED U.S. AS LEADER GRANTEE IN AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1958 AND HAS CONFIDENTIAL

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RETURNED VARIOUS TIMES ON OFFICIAL UN/UNESCO BUSINESS. DURING LATEST SUCH VISIT (OCTOBER 1975) M'BOW HAD LUNCH WITH THEN ACTING SECRETARY INGERSOLL AND TOP IO BUREAU OFFICIALS.

C) ALTHOUGH MOSLEM, M'BOW OBSERVES NO DIETARY RESTRICTIONS AND DOES NOT PERFORM HIS RELIGIOUS DUTIES. HE REFRAINS FROM ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OUT OF PERSONAL PREFERENCES, NOT RELIGIOUS SCRUPLES. ACCORDING TO U.S. PERM REP (PARIS) "M'BOW IS A COMPLEX PERSONALITY WHOSE VIRTUES ARE INSEPARABLE FROM HIS FAULTS. HE IS AN INTELLIGENT, FORCEFUL, DECISIVE, AND EXTREMELY SENSITIVE MAN, WHOSE SURFACE AFFABILITY QUICKLY GIVES WAY TO ANGRY REACTION AT ANY SUGGESTION, REAL OR FANCIED, THAT HIS VIEWPOINTS ARE FAULTILY REASONED OR ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. HE TENDS TO TALK MORE THAN HE LISTENS. HE IS NOTABLY PRONE TO MISTAKE WRY HUMOR, IF EXPRESSED IN THE CONTEXT OF DISAGREEMENT WITH ONE OF HIS POLICY POSITIONS, FOR DERISION PERSONALLY DIRECTED AT HIM."

D) M'BOW HAS A SENSE OF MISSION AS THE FIRST AFRICAN FROM SOUTH OF SAHARA TO HEAD A MAJOR SPECIALIZED AGENCY (WITH ASPIRATIONS TO HEAD THE UN ITSELF). IN PARTICULAR, HE SEEMS TO FEEL A MORAL OBLIGATION AND HIMSELF UNIQUELY WELL SUITED TO SEEK THAT THE UN AGENCIES ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS AND NEEDS OF THE THIRD WORLD MORE MEANINGFULLY THAN THEY HAVE IN THE PAST.

E) ALTHOUGH NOT AN UNRESERVED FRANCOPHILE, M'BOW'S PERCEPTIONS AND SUBJECTIVE KNOWLEDGE HAVE BEEN SHAPED BY HIS LIFE-LONG EXPOSURE TO FRANCE AND THE FRENCH. M'BOW REPUTEDLY TAUGHT AMERICAN HISTORY, BUT HE

APPARENTLY HAS LITTLE UNDERSTANDING OF THE AMERICAN
SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT AND CANNOT COMPREHEND WHY THE
PRESIDENT CANNOT SIMPLY ORDER PAYMENT OF U.S.
CONTRIBUTIONS IF, AS HE UNDERSTANDS FROM TALKS WITH
STATE/PERMDEL OFFICIALS, U.S. IS SYMPATHETIC TO
HIS PLIGHT AND SUPPORTS BOTH UNESCO AND HIM.

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD US, THOUGH HE REMAINS DEEPLY
APPRECIATIVE OF FACT WE WERE FIRST AMONG WESTERN POWERS
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TO SUPPORT HIS ELECTION AS DIRECTOR GENERAL, IS THUS
COLORED BY GROWING FRUSTRATION AND, WE SENSE, EVEN SOME
ANXIETY RE NATURE OF REAL US POSTURE TOWARD UNESCO AND
ITS FUTURE.

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